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HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Fifty-first session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1335th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 14 July 1994, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ANDO

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 40 OF THE COVENANT (agenda item 4) (continued)

Second periodic report of Cyprus (CCPR/C/32/Add.18; HRI/CORE/1/Add.28) (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the members of the Committee to put additional questions under section III of the list of issues.

2. Mr. HERNDL remarked that items III (e) and III (f) of the list of issues had been drafted in response to the fact that there was no information in the second periodic report of Cyprus (CCPR/C/32/Add.18) on the implementation of article 18 of the Covenant. Paragraph 73 of the report merely reproduced article 18 of the Constitution.

3. The Supplementary information furnished by the delegation contained the statement that paragraph 8 of article 18 of the Constitution was "fully respected". In other words, no person was "compelled to pay any tax or duty the proceeds of which are specially allocated in whole or in part for the purposes of a religion other than his own". That begged the question whether taxes or duties were levied in Cyprus for the specific purpose of supporting a religion. He asked if such was indeed the case.

4. The supplementary information further indicated that the position regarding the compulsory military service of conscientious objectors had been changed by Law No. 2 of 1992 amending the National Guard Laws of 1964 to 1989, and provided details from which it emerged that a type of alternative service, termed "unarmed military service", almost twice as long again in duration, was possible. Noting that proceedings in that regard against conscientious objectors were under way in Cyprus, he inquired whether the Government was aware of the Committee's general comment on article 18 (CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.4), and more especially of the view, set out in paragraph 11 therein, that "there shall be no discrimination against conscientious objectors because they have failed to perform military service". He submitted that such a disproportionate difference in the lengths of the two types of service reflected, if not discrimination, then at least a punitive element in the treatment of conscientious objectors.

5. Mrs. CHANET asked, in relation to the freedom of thought, conscience and religion established under article 18 of the Covenant and article 18 (1) of the Cypriot Constitution, whether Freemasonry, by its nature, was excluded from the provision of article 18 (2) of the latter instrument, which stated: "All religions whose doctrines or rites are not secret are free."

6. Concerning freedom of expression, she noted that, under article 19 (5) of the Constitution, cinema enterprises in Cyprus were subject to licensing, and asked what legal regulations pertained.

7. According to the report (para. 75), a Press Council had been set up under the Press Law of 1989; how was that body constituted? She said she understood that its considerable powers included the authority to withdraw the accreditation of journalists, and asked whether such action could be appealed against.

8. According to article 47 (b) of the Criminal Code, the publication of any words or document or any visible representation made with a "seditious intention" were punishable by imprisonment. Article 48 included under that description the intention "to excite disaffection against the Government ... or ... against the administration of justice in the Republic". She asked how a distinction was made, for the purposes of the law, between the excitement of disaffection and the expression of dissatisfaction that was essential to the healthy functioning of democracies.

9. Mrs. EVATT echoed other members' concern over the apparently excessive burden imposed on conscientious objectors to military service in Cyprus. She added that the legal basis for that treatment appeared to be at variance with the spirit of the Constitution, and notably its article 10 (3).

10. Concerning article 13 of the Covenant, she had taken due note of the supplementary information provided on the expulsion of aliens, but had been unable to determine whether provision was made in Cyprus for appeal against, or review of, deportation orders. She sought clarification on that point.

11. On the freedom of the press, the Committee was informed in the supplementary material that government officials were bound to give information to journalists unless there were certain specific reasons, including the security of the Republic, for not doing so. Did that imply an enforceable freedom-of-information provision; did it apply only to journalists; or did the information merely reflect a statement of good intent that had no legal consequences?

12. With regard to article 25 of the Covenant, the material before the Committee suggested that in some cases prisoners were excluded either from registering to vote or from voting. Did such exclusion from the democratic process occur automatically and irrespective of the offence committed or period of detention, or was it subject to a court order?

13. The supplementary information contained the comment that, since the invasion by Turkish forces, there had been no elections of the Turkish Vice-President or of Turkish members of the House of Representatives. That being so, what means of representation, and of participation in the electoral process, if any, were available to Turkish Cypriots who remained in the Government-controlled area or to those who might have moved to the occupied zone?

14. Mr. SADI noted that, according to article 14 of the Constitution, no citizen could be banished or excluded from the Republic of Cyprus. He asked whether extradition was possible in connection with crimes committed abroad.

15. Concerning the freedom of religion, he joined Mr. Herndl in asking whether the Cypriot authorities were aware of the Committee's general comment on article 18 of the Covenant, and suggested that its contents might provide guidance in amending domestic legislation relevant to that article. The current provision on religions deemed to be secret, as well as that according to which it was only after the age of 16 that a person might decide on his or her choice of religion, might usefully be reviewed.

16. With regard to the freedom of information and ideas of all kinds, he asked what steps had been taken in Cyprus to protect children from the damaging effect of excessive violence and pornography in films.

17. It was comforting to note that the encouragement of recourse to violence on the part of the inhabitants of Cyprus was circumscribed by law, but given the conflictual circumstances in which the country's two communities found themselves, he wondered how control could be effectively exercised, for example when self-defence was involved.

18. Mr. WENNERGREN said he understood the head of the Cypriot delegation to have stated that voting was compulsory in Cyprus. But apart from the fact that article 31 of the Constitution provided only for the "right" of every citizen to vote in any election, such compulsion was hardly compatible with the freedom of thought and conscience guaranteed under article 18 of the Covenant.

19. Concerning article 21 of the Covenant, the supplementary information provided by the Cypriot delegation reproduced a law, enacted as long ago as April 1958, that regulated the holding of assemblies and processions. The contents of that law appeared to be at variance with the provisions both of the Constitution and of the Covenant, which placed strict limits on any restrictions that might be imposed on the right of peaceful assembly. In particular, the law forbade and rendered punishable spontaneous gatherings for which a permit had not been applied for and granted in advance. Surely such gatherings could take place under conditions where the interests referred to in both of those instruments were fully respected?

20. Mr. PRADO VALLEJO, addressing the issue of the rights and status of aliens, asked whether he was correct in understanding that aliens were treated differently from Cypriot nationals in the matter of the acquisition of immovable property through purchase or by inheritance. He inquired what those differences were, and what were the reasons therefor.

21. Mr. STAVRINAKIS (Cyprus), referring to the freedom of religion, said that the application of article 18 of the Cypriot Constitution had never required legal regulation. The State did not consider Freemasonry to be a secret sect; he was not sure of the views of the Church in the matter, but no restriction or prohibition on the part of the Government prevented Freemasons from convening; additional information on that subject would be provided in due course.

22. As far as he knew, there was no provision in law for the payment of taxes to support a religion. The Church of Cyprus derived its own income mainly from voluntary donations by Christians, or from fees for the provision of religious services (christenings, marriages, funerals, etc.).

23. A special, comprehensive document on the subject of conscientious objection to military service would be prepared for the Committee in response to members' questions.

24. More detailed information on the legal status and composition of the Press Council would also be compiled; the Council was a non-governmental body composed mainly of representatives of the press; the Director of the Public Information Office also participated in its work.

25. A law on motion-picture films provided for censorship; he was not sure whether it covered videos. The Children Law provided, inter alia, for their protection from injurious films. The Committee would be informed of any changes in the law in that respect.

26. It was for the courts to determine in any given case - none had occurred, to his knowledge, in recent years - what definition should be given to the term "seditious intention". He cited, in extenso, the list of meanings contained in article 48 of the Criminal Code. The term had been borrowed from the English legal system; if necessary, reference might also be made to English case law for an interpretation.

27. The extradition of Cypriot citizens to another State was not permitted under the provisions of the Constitution. However, the prosecuting authorities might be contacted in connection with crimes committed abroad, which were classified as offences in Cyprus and over which the courts had jurisdiction. Aliens under an order of deportation could appeal against that order and apply for habeas corpus if subject to detention pending deportation. Complaints could also be addressed to the Commissioner for Administration Law, who had dealt with several such cases of late. Moreover, a member of the House of Representatives had recently proposed that a special body should be set up to deal with such appeals, presided over by a judge or a person with legal qualifications. Within the Law Reforms Commission, a special committee had been set up to revise current legislation on aliens, including the grounds for refusal of entry into and deportation from the territory of the Republic of Cyprus.

28. As to questions regarding the access of journalists to official documents and the obligations of civil servants in that regard, the issue would be well covered in the third periodic report. Under existing legislation, civil servants were not obliged to hand over information to the press that was deemed confidential. However, a bill had recently been drafted entitled "Special Information and Documents Law", which was intended to safeguard the right of citizens to seek information while enabling the Government to protect any information in the interests of the State or for reasons of public safety. A public official requested by journalists to provide sensitive information might seek the advice of a superior, who in case of doubt would refer the matter to the Attorney General, for a final decision.

29. He referred members to the supplementary material submitted to the Committee for further details on the acquisition of immovable property by aliens. He stressed that there were no restrictions on the right of aliens to acquire legally inherited property.

30. The law to regulate the holding of assemblies and processions had been enacted in 1958 at the time of the Cypriot people's struggle against the colonial regime and its purpose had been to quell their resistance. The law was currently under review on account of its rather antiquated provisions, some of which ran counter to the Constitution.

31. Regarding matters of suffrage, he confirmed that prisoners would be entitled to vote under the new prison law, on which information would be provided in the third periodic report. Furthermore, it was likely that members of the Turkish minority who had remained in the Government-controlled area did not exercise their right to vote. Concerns had also been voiced regarding citizens' obligation to vote. Although citizens were obliged by law to report at polling stations, they were free to vote for the candidate of their choice or could cast a blank vote if they so wished. Their vote was totally secret and not subject to any supervision. The electoral laws were currently under review and the compulsory nature of elections had been one of the issues taken up by the review committee concerned during a recent meeting at the Ministry of the Interior. The committee must issue its findings before the end of 1994 so as to enable preparations for the forthcoming elections to commence.

32. The age at which persons could choose their religion would be subject to review in line with the efforts under way to establish one legal age of majority for all purposes. As to concerns expressed regarding the promotion of violence and hatred, many of the relevant provisions in the Criminal Code were antiquated and inconsistent with the Constitution and therefore not applicable. A case in point were the provisions relating to treasonable acts or allied offences. During the coup d'état of 1974 many acts had been committed that might fall into that category. To his knowledge, the only charges brought had been in respect of ill-treatment or homicide and not for offences against public safety and public order. In conclusion, he said that information on any questions he might have overlooked would be forwarded to the Committee or included in the third periodic report.

33. The CHAIRMAN said that any additional written information would be welcome. He invited the members of the Committee to make their concluding observations on Cyprus' second periodic report.

34. Mr. HERNDL said he had enjoyed the broad-ranging discussion held with the Cypriot delegation. He commended the latter on the wealth of information provided in the report proper, the core document, the supplementary material and the replies to the questions in the list of issues, all of which had greatly facilitated the work of the Committee. It might be worthwhile looking into the possibility of merging the two principal reports with a view to their subsequent publication as a single Committee document which could be recorded in the Committee's yearbook. As to the substance of the report, most of the issues raised had been dealt with satisfactorily. He recognized that because

the Constitution of Cyprus dated from 1960 and many parts of its national legislation were a legacy from the previous regime, certain obstacles to the full implementation of the Covenant remained. As to the status of the latter, he hoped that appropriate measures would be taken by the judicial and administrative authorities to provide for the application of its provisions as necessary. Furthermore, information on the rights enshrined in that instrument should be disseminated throughout the country, in particular to the civil service.

35. Mr. SADI said that, in the light of the very useful dialogue and above all the openness of the Cypriot delegation, he was confident that appropriate action would be taken on the Committee's recommendations. Nevertheless, he had two basic concerns. First, there was no means of evaluating the status of the Covenant vis-à-vis national legislation, since thus far no pronouncements in that connection had been made by a court of law in Cyprus. Second, the powers of the police seemed excessive. Similar problems encountered in countries of the Middle East had been attributed to the general training and attitude of the police force there. Such problems could not be resolved through appropriate legislation, but rather by enhancing the image of the police and creating greater awareness of the need to observe the provisions of the Covenant, especially in respect of detainees. He hoped that the Cypriot authorities would give those matters due consideration.

36. Mr. AGUILAR URBINA said that his initial misgivings regarding the human rights situation in Cyprus had been dispelled by the frank attitude of the Cypriot delegation, which had made for a constructive dialogue with the Committee. Nevertheless, he was gravely concerned about the ill-treatment of detainees by the police, which violated the provisions of article 7 of the Covenant. A further concern, in connection with article 14 of the Covenant, was the apparent difficulty with which evidence against the police was admitted by a court of law. He personally was not in favour of any relaxation of the presumption of innocence, a principle which should be adhered to as strictly as possible. A case in point was the outright refusal by a judge to allow the showing of a video film as evidence against the police, without any effort to ascertain whether the video cassette had been tampered with.

37. Legislation relating to persons who refused to perform national military service was not in keeping with the provisions of article 18 of the Covenant. Conscientious objection as such was not recognized in Cyprus. It was worthwhile noting that under a state of emergency there could be no exemption whatsoever from military service. Moreover, the difference in the length of service to be performed was tantamount to discrimination. The fact that each refusal to perform military service constituted a separate offence, liable to prosecution, contradicted article 14, paragraph 7 of the Covenant.

38. Mr. EL SHAFEI expressed appreciation of the detailed information provided on the legal system and the promotion of human rights in Cyprus as well as the additional clarifications on the progress of law reform and the report on the status of the conflict in the country. The current stalemate led to the continued violation of, inter alia, articles 6, 9, 10, 12, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25 and 26 of the Covenant due to the lack of information regarding involuntary disappearances, mainly of Greek Cypriots, during the conflict. It was deeply

regrettable that a peaceful solution could not be found to the conflict, despite the concern of the international community, and the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

39. He stressed the importance of the timely submission of reports and additional material so as to enable the Committee to make an accurate and regular assessment of the human rights situation in the reporting country. It had emerged from the dialogue that most of the basic human rights and freedoms set forth in the Covenant were guaranteed in Cyprus. However, he shared the concerns voiced regarding the ill-treatment of persons held in detention as well as the situation of conscientious objectors. Current legislation regarding military and alternative service should be reviewed and the Committee's general comment on article 18 would provide useful guidance in that respect. Mention had been made of the imminent establishment of a special study group in Cyprus to examine the status of the Covenant, in the light of suggestions made by members during their dialogue with the Cypriot delegation. He hoped that the Committee would be kept informed of the outcome of the group's work.

40. Mr. PRADO VALLEJO said that the Committee had had a very useful dialogue with the delegation of Cyprus, whose replies had been extremely constructive. He regretted the fact that a foreign Power was occupying part of the territory of Cyprus, which prevented the observance of human rights in that area. It was also regrettable that the occupying authority had not complied with the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

41. However, he wished to draw attention to some other matters of concern. First of all, consideration should be given to the problem of conscientious objectors. Secondly, there was a need for measures to be taken to put an end to the ill-treatment of persons during police custody. His third concern had to do with the minimum age at which the death penalty could be applied. The Covenant set that age at 18, whereas the law in force in Cyprus referred to 16 years of age. That discrepancy must be overcome in order to bring Cypriot legislation into line with the Covenant. Another point of concern had to do with the extended nature of pre-trial detention permitted under Cypriot legislation. Such detention could last several months, increasing the likelihood of human rights violations and police brutality occurring. In his opinion, the period should be long enough to allow for appropriate investigation, but the prisoner should then be brought before the court. With regard to the right of aliens to acquire property, he said that limitations existed which had not been fully explained. The Government of Cyprus should look into the matter so as to ensure that aliens enjoyed the same rights as Cypriots, in keeping with the spirit and letter of the Covenant.

42. In conclusion, he assured the delegation of his admiration for the way in which the Government was dealing with the difficult situation posed by foreign occupation.

43. Mr. WENNERGREN expressed his appreciation of the assistance given by the delegation of Cyprus.

44. Noting that Cypriot legislation still contained relics from colonial times, he said that the law setting the minimum age for the imposition of the death sentence at 16 years should be deleted from Cypriot legislation. Furthermore, the 1958 Law on Assembly should be brought into line with the Constitution and the Covenant.

45. With regard to the freedom of conscience, he referred to article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and said that efforts should be made to take good care of the conscience with which all human beings were endowed. To make it a duty to vote was to act in a patriarchal manner and to place undue demands on citizens. He stressed the need to take account of the principle of freedom of conscience and to realize that obliging persons to participate in the political life of their country might lead to a situation that was contrary to their conscience.

46. Referring to the ill-treatment of persons during police custody he said that it was essential to ensure that the law could fulfil its function of protecting citizens and ensuring full respect for the presumption of innocence.

47. Mr. FRANCIS thanked the Cypriot delegation for its replies to members' questions. On the whole, the dialogue between the delegation and the Committee had been quite fruitful and he was sure that the Committee's views would be taken into account in the preparation of the third periodic report of Cyprus.

48. The relationship between the Covenant and the Cypriot legal regime needed to be placed on a correct basis. The problem lay in the fact that article 169 (3) of the Constitution dated back to 1960 and the founding fathers of the Constitution could not have foreseen the provisions of article 27 of the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which stated that "A party may not invoke the provisions of its internal law as justification for its failure to perform a treaty". He assumed that Cyprus was a party to the Vienna Convention and therefore considered that it would be necessary to amend article 169 (3) of its Constitution in order to bring it into line with its international relations under the treaty.

49. The opening paragraph of the second periodic report of Cyprus, made it quite clear that the Rome Convention and its Protocol had been given parallel legal status to part II of the Constitution of Cyprus, setting forth fundamental rights and liberties. No less a status should be accorded to the Covenant.

50. Mrs. CHANET said that in Cyprus, the Covenant occupied a rank which was somewhat intermediary - above the law but below the Constitution. Some provisions of the Covenant had constitutional force while others were at the level of domestic law. What needed to be done was to examine the repercussions of the Covenant's ranking vis-à-vis domestic law and the Constitution. That would be an opportunity to clarify matters so that all rights set forth in the Covenant would have the highest possible standing.

51. With regard to imprisonment for debt, an effort should be made to introduce reforms in that area and recourse should be had to imprisonment only after all other measures had been exhausted.

52. Referring to the question of conscientious objection, she noted that alternative service was virtually double the duration of military service and that each case was considered to be a new offence even though it really involved an ongoing objection. That situation could give rise to a violation of article 14, paragraph 7, of the Covenant.

53. In conclusion, she expressed the hope that in the near future Cyprus would accede to the second Optional Protocol aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

54. Mr. BRUNI CELLI said that, despite the problems which Cyprus had had to face, it had an excellent human rights record. He also took note of the Government's determination to overcome such difficulties.

55. Nevertheless, he had misgivings concerning the situation that existed with regard to implementation of articles 7 and 14 of the Covenant and hoped that the information which the delegation of Cyprus had promised to send to the Committee would make it possible to clarify matters related to torture and ill-treatment. In that regard, account should be taken of what had been said in the Committee concerning the problem of the responsibility of the police when persons were found dead in certain circumstances.

56. Mrs. EVATT also thanked the delegation of Cyprus for an excellent dialogue with the Committee, and for being so frank and open in response to questions. In view of the difficulties arising from the Turkish occupation, it was all the more praiseworthy that the country's commitment to democracy and to human rights had not been undermined. The fact that Cyprus was a small country and a signatory to many other instruments had perhaps contributed to the delay in submitting the report. She was glad to hear that in future reporting would be in the hands of the Law Commissioner, which should help to speed up the process.

57. There seemed to be a wave of reform in Cyprus, since the report had referred to many new laws which had either just come into force or had just been submitted to Parliament, as well as to a new commission to investigate allegations against the police. Those were all welcome developments, and she looked forward to hearing of the impact they had had in Cyprus' next periodic report.

58. The Committee was concerned that certain of the provisions of the Constitution, as well as some current laws, were outdated and needed reform. She had been pleased to hear that a thorough review of the latter was in progress, since it was chiefly through individual laws that human rights were safeguarded. Other members had referred to the law on conscientious objection, and to the problem of police violence. Change in police attitudes should be brought about at operations level, through education and training, and there should be insistence on compliance with basic minimum standards as set out in international instruments.

59. Imprisonment for civil debt seemed to her to be an unnecessary use of State force. When the debtor had the means to pay, there should be other ways of dealing with the problem. Concerning the use of video evidence in criminal proceedings, it might be helpful for Cyprus to study recent reforms in the law of evidence in other common-law countries, such as Australia.

60. On the matter of women's equality, she noted that certain traces of patriarchal attitudes still remained in the Constitution and in some of the laws, and welcomed the fact that there was a committee looking into the question. There might be a need for further positive measures to bring about a greater level of political participation. The laws prohibiting violence against women were new, and their effectiveness was not yet proven. They would need careful monitoring, and should be supplemented by legal assistance and other kinds of support, in view of the high incidence of violence against women in the country.

61. She hoped that the Committee would be able to engage in further dialogue with Cyprus before too long to hear whether the reforms had borne fruit, and looked forward to receiving its third periodic report.

62. Mr. POCAR said the dialogue with the delegation of Cyprus was one of the most rewarding the Committee had had with any State party. All issues had been dealt with seriously, competently and frankly, and the report itself had been of very high quality. The impressive documentation annexed to it, containing the texts not only of laws but also of court rulings, had been enlightening, and had helped to dispel the doubts that normally arose when the Committee was not in possession of full information.

63. His general impression was that, notwithstanding the difficulties faced by Cyprus as a result of the Turkish occupation, the situation in the Government-controlled area was satisfactory, and human rights in general were respected, although both legislation and administrative practice still retained certain features going back to colonial times, and needed to be brought into line with the provisions of the Covenant.

64. One problem that was not peculiar to Cyprus, but common to all States which were parties to regional arrangements such as the European Convention, was the tendency to refer in human rights matters to regional rather than to United Nations instruments, on the mistaken assumption that the former were more progressive. Although that might be so where implementation machinery was concerned, comparison of the provisions of the regional instrument with those of the Covenant showed that they overlapped only to a limited extent, and that there were a number of important differences which deserved the attention of national authorities. He would therefore recommend that Cyprus should continuously check its legislation against the Covenant, taking into account the Committee's comments.

65. He likewise believed that the Optional Protocol should be given greater publicity, especially among lawyers, so that people could better avail themselves of the remedies it provided. He noted that Cyprus had acceded to the Optional Protocol without reservation, unlike many States which were also parties to the European Convention, and had declared that the Committee was

precluded from considering a communication when the same matter had been considered by the European Commission or the European Court. Cyprus was to be commended in that regard, since by so doing it gave additional protection to victims in areas, such as discrimination, not covered by the European Convention: for example, the Convention, unlike the Covenant, did not provide an autonomous right to equality before the law.

66. Now that a university had been established in Cyprus, he hoped that study of the Covenant and particularly of the Optional Protocol would be made part of the curriculum of its Faculty of Law. He looked forward to Cyprus' next report and to continuation of the dialogue, which he was confident would show further progress in implementation of the Covenant.

67. The CHAIRMAN said he had been greatly impressed by the sincerity and frankness shown by the delegation of Cyprus during its dialogue with the Committee, and also by the time and energy expended on the preparation of documentation. The Committee would notify the Government of Cyprus as soon as possible of the date for submission of its next periodic report. On behalf of the Committee, he thanked the delegation wholeheartedly for its efforts.

68. Mr. STAVRINAKIS (Cyprus) thanked members of the Committee for their kind words. His delegation was gratified to have assisted the Committee in its work, and was reassured to learn that its endeavours had been along the right lines. He would convey the Committee's concerns to his Government for immediate consideration and action.

69. The CHAIRMAN said that consideration of the second periodic report of Cyprus was now concluded.

70. Mr. Stavrinakis, Mrs. Markides and Mrs. Loisidou (Cyprus) withdrew.

The meeting was suspended at 12.25 p.m. and resumed at 12.45 p.m.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND OTHER MATTERS (agenda item 2) (continued)

71. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee now had to decide whether to request the Government of Cyprus to submit its third periodic report at the end of the current year, or in 1995. In the past, it had been the Committee's practice in the case of States parties which had fallen behind in submission of their reports to fix a date later than the one originally set, and he believed the same practice should be followed in the case of Cyprus.

72. Mr. BRUNI CELLI suggested that since Cyprus' fourth periodic report was now almost due, it might be asked to submit the third and fourth together in a single consolidated document.

73. Mrs. EVATT said she would prefer the earlier date. Since the Committee had already had a very extensive dialogue with the delegation of Cyprus, the third periodic report would merely update information already provided, and could probably be dealt with in a single meeting.

74. Mr. HERNDL said what was essential was for the Committee to know how far Cyprus had put into effect the Committee's conclusions, and it would be difficult for the Government to study those conclusions and indicate its intentions in regard to them in the space of some five months. He would prefer setting the deadline at the end of 1995.

75. Mr. POCAR supported the proposal to request that the third periodic report should be submitted by the end of the current year. The Committee could then decide whether it would deal with it in a single meeting, or consider it in conjunction with the fourth periodic report, though without consolidating the two, which would set an undesirable precedent. He was inclined to prefer the first alternative.

76. Mr. EL SHAFEI supported the views expressed by Mr. Herndl. The Committee had made a number of specific comments on provisions of Cyprus' Constitution and legislation, and it would take some time for the Government to enact new provisions or adjust existing ones. A 1995 deadline was more realistic.

77. Mr. FRANCIS recalled that the delegation of Cyprus had stated that its third periodic report was almost completed. If a country was ready to submit a report, it should do so; the Committee could then decide when to consider it, in the light of the time it had available.

78. Mr. AGUILAR URBINA and Mr. PRADO VALLEJO supported that view.

79. The CHAIRMAN said there seemed to be a clear majority in favour of requesting Cyprus to submit its third periodic report by the end of the current year. Once the report was received, the Committee could decide how many meeting days it would need to consider it, taking into account points raised during the discussion.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.